



Email this article
Print this article
Most popular pages

Click to send
Choose File Print or Ctrl P or Apple P
Today | This Week

55th Avenue picked for South Mountain Fwy route

Corinne Purtill
The Arizona Republic
Jun. 29, 2006 11:25 AM

The Arizona Department of Transportation announced Thursday morning that it will stick with a plan nearly two decades old and build the South Mountain Freeway along 55th Avenue in Laveen.

The decision is not technically final. The route isn't official until the Federal Highway Administration signs off on the project, likely in late 2007.

However, a change to this plan "would only occur if substantial new information pertinent to the selection process were discovered," ADOT said in a statement.

The announcement, made at ADOT's downtown Phoenix headquarters, ends five years of speculation as to where the long-delayed highway will go in the fast-growing West Valley.

The South Mountain Freeway is the final leg of Loop 202. Though it was first proposed in 1985 as part of the Regional Transportation Plan, budget shortfalls pushed the freeway off the priority list as the Valley developed its transportation network.

The passage of Proposition 400 renewed the drive to get the freeway built. ADOT wants to break ground in 2008 and finish the 22- to 26-mile highway by 2015.

Original plans routed the freeway from down 55th Avenue from Interstate 10 in west Phoenix, around South Mountain Park and down Pecos Road before reconnecting to I-10 south of Ahwatukee Foothills.

A federal study launched in 2001 required ADOT to review several options for the route.

Pecos Road is landlocked by the Gila River Reservation to the south and the developed subdivisions of Ahwatukee to the north, limiting alternatives. That route is still the only official option in the east.

But in the West Valley, planners studied a variety of routes. They finally narrowed their choices to the original path at 55th Avenue, one at 71st Avenue and along 99th Avenue, south of Loop 101.

In April, a citizen review panel appointed by ADOT recommended the Loop 101 alignment. The original alignment had heavy political backing from Phoenix, West Valley cities and landowners along the route.

Email this article
Print this article
Most popular pages

Click to send
Choose File Print or Ctrl P or Apple P
Today | This Week